

# Education for Special Populations

## Mission

To provide specific educational services to students with disabilities and students who are hospitalized, neglected, delinquent, and/or homeless, to give them the best possible opportunities to live, learn, work, and play in their communities.

## Summary of Activities

Education services for special populations are provided by the state in two ways: through additional funding to local school corporations, and through the maintenance of special residential facilities.

State tuition support grants from the **Department of Education** (DOE) provide the bulk of state special education funding, through a formula that generates dollars based on the nature of each student's disability. Funding for special populations also provides for the administration of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); provides educational support for children hospitalized in Riley Children's Hospital; provides wrap-around services to connect children to medical, social, and mental health services in their local communities; provides funding for the special transportation needs of students with disabilities. Grants are also made available to schools to serve gifted and talented students. At the local level, the funds are used to provide many services including audiology, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and school health services. Such services supplement regular classroom instruction.

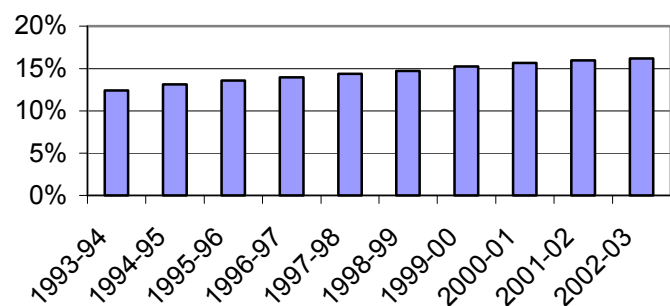


Indiana maintains a **School for the Deaf** and a **School for the Blind**; both are full-service residential facilities located in Indianapolis. In addition to their residential programs, both schools also provide outreach services to local school corporations to assist in educating other students with disabilities related to vision and audiology. The **Soldiers' and Sailors' Children's Home** in Knightstown is a residential facility providing full K-12 education services, health services and recreation for at-risk children placed in the facility by their parents, guardians, or a juvenile court. The **Silvercrest Children's Development Center**

is a short-term residential center in New Albany that provides full K-12 education services for children with severe emotional and behavioral disorders who have generally exhausted the resources of their local public schools and community and are excluded from mainstream education.

The Department of Correction also provides full K-12 educational services for adjudicated juveniles; however, the funding for these services is included in the Juvenile Corrections program.

**Incidence of Special Education Students in Total School Population**



## External Factors

The most significant factors affecting services for special populations are the growing number of students identified as needing special education services, the ever-evolving needs of students, and federal legislation. The reauthorization of IDEA and the No Child Left behind Act are two examples of such legislation. New brain research, new teaching methodologies, and new instructional practice, including the mandate for alternative assessment systems, have driven change in serving students with special education needs.

## Evaluation and Accomplishments

The DOE has provided clear-cut procedures for providing the least restrictive educational environment for students with disabilities through wrap-around services available to children in the communities in which they live. This has allowed schools to serve more children more appropriately and closer to home, while creating the infrastructure for services and creating new taxpayers. This is evidenced by the 2001-02 Post-School Follow-up Study (completed June 2003), in which 72.4 percent of the respondents, all of whom had received special education services, were employed four years after graduation. In addition, Indiana participated in a nationwide comprehensive study of special education spending. The DOE is able to determine average special education and general education expenditures per student receiving special education, and how those expenditures vary by type of student, school, placement, and district.



## Plans for the Biennium

The DOE is implementing, as required by IDEA and No Child Left Behind, alternate assessments for students with disabilities for whom ISTEP+ is not appropriate. The assessment measures students' skills along a continuum of academic standards. Individualized education programs (IEPs) are written for all students who qualify for special education services. An IEP identifies the student's disability and needs, describes annual goals to address those needs, and identifies the services to be provided to help the student achieve the goals. The DOE provides model IEP forms, as well as guidelines for developing IEPs, to local schools to help ensure that all students are exposed to academic standards that will best serve them when they leave their K-12 educational experiences to live, learn, work and play in their local communities.

